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A

# WALK AT HOWTH.

OF

## GUIDE.

BY

Discontinuent Objects of Interest.

BY

J. HUGHES SMITH, A.M., B.R.I.A.

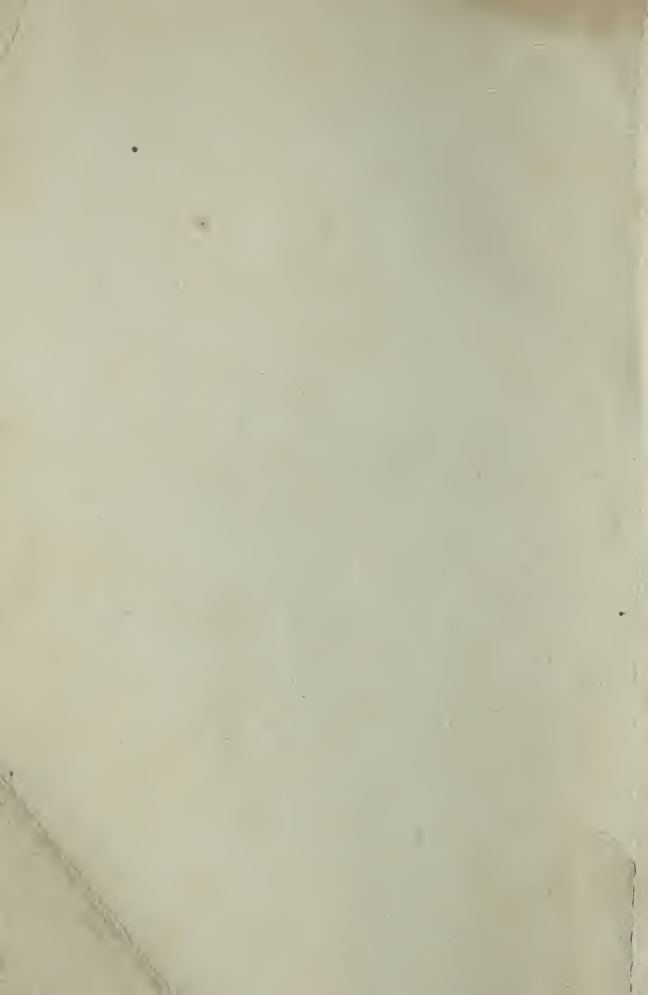
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A  
DAY AT HOWTH:

OR,  
GUIDE

TO  
ITS MOST PROMINENT OBJECTS OF INTEREST:

CONTAINING  
NOTICES OF ITS EARLY HISTORY AND ARCHÆOLOGICAL REMAINS  
ITS GEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE, BOTANICAL PRODUCTIONS,  
AND OBJECTS OF NATURAL HISTORY, ETC.

BY  
J. HUBAND SMITH, A. M., M. R. I. A.

---

“ Fair is this isle,—this dear child of the Ocean,—  
Nurtured with more than a mother’s devotion;  
For, see ! in what rich robes has Nature arrayed her,  
From the waves of the west to the cliffs of Ben Edar.”

---

D. F. MAC CARTHY.

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· TO

THE EARL OF HOWTH, K.S.P., &c. &c.,

This little Book,

DESIGNED TO AWAKEN MORE GENERAL INTEREST IN THE  
PECULIAR ATTRACTIONS OF THE PENINSULAR HILL,  
FOR SEVEN CENTURIES THE ANCESTRAL  
DOMAIN OF THE ANCIENT  
FAMILY OF

ST. LAWRENCE,

IS INSCRIBED,

WITH MUCH RESPECT,

BY

HIS VERY OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

55334



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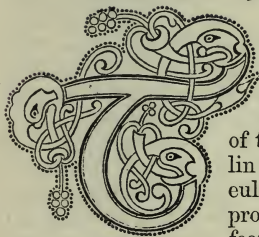
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# A DAY AT HOWTH.

## Howth.



THE stranger who approaches Ireland from the east cannot fail to be struck by the beauty of the sea-coast. The Bay of Dublin has long been the subject of eulogium, and one of its most prominent, and, perhaps, loveliest features, is the fine peninsular Hill

of Howth, which, as it stretches seaward into the channel dividing the British Islands, offers an object on which the charmed eye rests with surprise and delight. Its ancient Irish name of Ben Eadar (bin Eadair), derived from that of the hero Eadar (said in ancient Irish traditions to be brother of Breagh, from whom the twin Headland of Bray, on the opposite shore of Wicklow, obtained its name) well indicates its bold position as the Headland against which the waves of centuries have broken, indenting its rocky shore with many a cave, the haunt of the seals and sea-birds. In ancient records this promontory has been designated by the names Hofda and Houete; and finally, in modern times, by that of Houeth or Howth: all clearly derivable from the Scandinavian "höfud or hoved," a headland, and appropriately given to this place by the Danish or Norwegian inhabitants of Dublin. Above its rugged and precipitous cliffs rise

sloping mountain pastures, dotted with cottages and patches of cultivated land. As one approaches still closer, spots more fertile and of greater extent become visible, especially on the southern and more sheltered side; and numerous country-seats and villas occupy the sunniest and most charming sites along the shores of the bay. Towards its western extremity the Hill assumes a softer character, and, exhibiting a higher degree of fertility and capability of cultivation, extends in gradual slopes from a sterile range of rocky heights to the richer and lower lands. And here the woods which surround Howth Castle give a new aspect to the landscape, and offer to the eye that sylvan beauty which forest scenery alone can exhibit. In strong contrast to this very beautiful demesne are the wild and lonely valleys which are to be found at higher levels near the summit of the Hill. A short walk brings one to scenes of highland and even savage character, where the lover of nature may bury himself in the wild solitude of a mountain, and shut out from view everything but rock, heather, fern, and wild plants; above him nothing but the blue sky: and where he can easily fancy that hundreds of miles of distance interpose between the calm loneliness of the spot and the noisy and busy turmoil of a metropolis.

Let us imagine that some one about to visit the Hill of Howth for the first time is desirous of having his attention briefly pointed to the leading and most interesting facts connected with its present state; its chief points of interest for the geologist, the botanist, and the naturalist; its past history, and the traces of ancient inhabitants yet to be found in its various monuments of every class and age—the ruined cromlech of a Pagan period—the regal fortress of the monarch Crimthan, and his sepulchral cairn—the early Christian oratory, and the venerable abbey of later times—and lastly, the more modern baronial hall, with the still prominent traces of the warlike character of its original possessors. Let us suppose that, a stranger to Howth, he starts at

an early hour in the day from the Dublin Terminus of the Drogheda railway, and while from these pages he will collect what may be accomplished in a visit to Howth of from eight to ten hours, they will, it is to be hoped, open up sufficient sources of enjoyment to induce him, if leisure shall permit, to repeat his visit again and again.

Such repeated visits will infallibly bring home to every refined and educated heart the conviction that—

“ Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,  
Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
From joy to joy : for she can so inform  
The heart that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,  
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all  
The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold  
Is full of blessings.”

WORDSWORTH.

---

## The Howth Railway.

The Dublin Terminus of the Drogheda Railway is finely situated in Amiens-street, where it occupies an imposing position within view of Nelson's Pillar. The building is of considerable extent, in the Italian style of architecture, erected from the design of Mr. W. D. Butler. Its façade, of fine Irish granite from the county of Wicklow, extends in length 140 feet, while a clock-tower, or campanile, rises above it in height 90 feet. This Railway was constructed by Sir John McNeill, who received the honour of knighthood upon the opening of the line for traffic in the month of May, 1844. It is eminently noted for the beauty of the scenery along its whole extent to Drogheda, a distance of thirty-two miles. It passes close to the coast,

in several places crossing small arms of the sea, and passing through a district of great fertility and picturesque beauty, remarkable also for many objects of interest in an historical and archæological point of view. At the distance of four miles and three-quarters is the Junction station-house of the Branch Railway to Howth, in length three miles and a half.

Shortly after leaving the Dublin Terminus, to the right of the railway appears the village of Clontarf (Cluain Tarb, the green field of the Bull), embosomed in trees, and surrounded by suburban villas. It derives its name from the great sandbank called the Bull, on which the sea in stormy weather breaks with a loud noise. Clontarf is stated by our old Annalists to be situated in that part of the fertile district known as the plain of Magh n-Ealta, designated in the "Annals of the Four Masters" Sean Magh n-Ealta Eobair, which, as Dr. O'Donovan, in the learned notes to his edition of these Annals, informs us, signifies "the old plain of the flocks of Edar."

A memorable battle was fought here on Good Friday, A. D. 1014, between the Irish, under the command of their king, Brian Borumha, and the Danes, who had infested Ireland for some centuries, and who sustained a signal defeat, attended, however, by the death of the veteran monarch of Ireland, who was slain in the moment of victory.

Marino, the residence of the Earl of Charlemont, is charmingly situated here, surrounded by a demesne of great beauty, comprising about 200 acres, laid out with the purest taste by the father of the present noble owner, and containing within its bounds some noble trees, and, among other ornamental buildings, a temple or casino, of the Doric order, built by the celebrated Sir William Chambers, enriched with finely sculptured friezes; colossal lions are placed at the angles of the basement, which rests on a square platform, ascended by broad flights of steps. The interior of this temple is finished with elaborate care: and from the flat roof one of the finest panoramic views is obtained of the city

and bay of Dublin, bounded by the lovely mountains of the county of Wicklow.

Clontarf Castle, the residence of Mr. Vernon, is much to be admired. The present structure, built from the design of the deceased Mr. William Morrison, a most accomplished architect, in the Norman castellated style, has succeeded the ancient Preceptory of the Knights Templars, dependent on the still more extensive establishment of the Order at Kilmainham, suppressed in the sixteenth century.

The first station is at the village of Raheny, which takes its name from the ancient rath or earthwork, of which many are to be seen in every part of Ireland. A tract of considerable extent here formed part of the lordship of the renowned John de Courcy, Lord of Rathenny and Kilbarrock, who was slain by the sons of Hugh de Lacy at Downpatrick, in the beginning of the thirteenth century. He is not to be confounded with Sir John de Curcy, the conqueror of Ulster, who lived at an earlier period, but, as has been suggested by the learned Dr. Richard Butler, Dean of Clonmacnoise, was, probably, the son of Vivian de Cursun. (See notes to "Grace's Annals," note, p. 24, and the "Registry of All Hallows," p. 125, Ir. Archæol. Soc.) The country near this village is rich and beautifully undulated. Numerous suburban villas, surrounded with ornamental grounds, are to be seen here.

At the Junction station the Branch Railway to Howth leaves the main trunk of the Drogheda line, and approaches the low sandy isthmus which connects the Hill of Howth with the mainland, upon which stands the little fishing village of Baldoyle. This town was anciently known by the name of Bally dubh gail, i. e. baile dubh gail, "the town of the black strangers," the designation applied by the ancient Irish annalists to the Danes, from which came Balidowyl, and lastly, the modern Baldoyle, which clearly indicate its Danish origin. Just in the same manner the appellation of the adjacent district of Fingal is derivable from the "white stran-

gers," by which designation the Norwegians were known to the same annalists.

After leaving the Junction station, the railway, crossing the isthmus diagonally, approaches the northern coast of Howth, and the rocky islet of Ireland's Eye is observed close at hand, while beyond lies the larger island of Lambay, and the long line of Portmarnock strand. The Mourne mountains in the county of Down, one of which, Slieve Donard, was long considered as the highest in Ireland, stretch along the northern horizon, and, though distant, are remarkable for their beauty of outline.

To the right of the railway is the Sutton strand and oyster-beds. At the station named from this locality it may be said that Howth begins. During late years numerous little villas have been erected hereabouts, which afford healthful summer residences. The Hill now rises in all its wild beauty, and the woods surrounding Howth Castle are seen to great advantage.

The gateway of the demesne of Howth Castle appears to the right, with the tower of the little village church close beside it. The railway terminates here at the verge of the harbour.

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### Howth Harbour.

An original plan for creating this harbour for the despatch of mail packet-boats from Howth was proposed by the Hon. and Rev. William Dawson, who published his suggestions in the year 1801, and who continued for several years to press the matter upon the attention of Government; and in 1807 the first stone of the principal pier was laid by the late eminent engineer, W. Rennie. The space enclosed within the harbour is stated to be fifty-two English acres. The eastern pier is 2700 feet in length, having a lighthouse at its extremity; and the western 2280. The breadth of the entrance is 320 feet. The depth of water at that point

is 11 feet at low water, and the tide rises from 9 to 12 feet.

On the 12th of August, 1821, George IV. landed here, and was received with the utmost enthusiasm by the inhabitants of Dublin. He paid, however, but a brief visit to Ireland, embarking again for England, at Kingstown Harbour, on the 3rd of September following.

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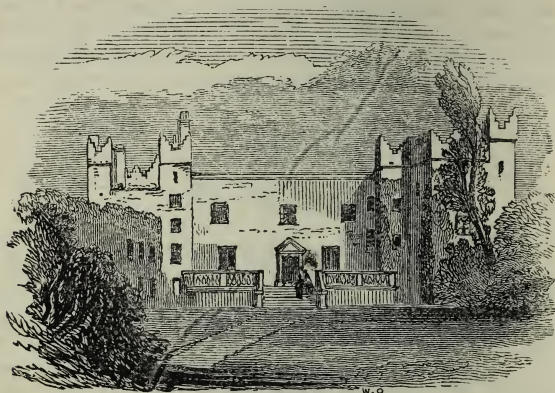
## Howth Castle.

This fine old baronial mansion has been for many centuries the chief residence of the noble family of Howth, who have been in the uninterrupted enjoyment of the possessions of their progenitors since the arrival of their first ancestor, Sir Amoric Tristram, in this country in the twelfth century. It evidently consists of portions erected at very different periods. One of the oldest parts of the Castle which now catches the attention stands a little in advance of the central mansion, and was the great gateway tower; it may safely be referred to the middle of the sixteenth century, when the Castle was, in a great measure, rebuilt by Christopher, the twentieth Lord of Howth.

The square building called Corstown Castle, which stands on a rising ground at some distance beyond the Deer-park, is clearly not of an earlier date than that above assigned to the gateway tower. It has but little external beauty; there is, however, one window of rather elegant form, at the upper story, looking eastward, deeply recessed within; and some doorways and fireplaces, of similar character, are to be found in the interior. It has long been a ruin, and has been used as a stand-house for the surrounding race-course.

Few noble mansions are more interesting in an archaeological point of view than the fine old Castle of Howth. It possesses many most characteristic features internally, in its baronial hall, its oak-panelled apartments, with

their deeply-recessed windows, its staircases, and winding passages. These all render it as interesting to the



lover of mediæval architecture as any of the residences of our old nobility; and too much commendation cannot be given to the present noble possessor for the care bestowed on its preservation. The Castle stands in a situation where it commands no view of any great extent. It is a long battlemented structure, flanked by square towers at each extremity. It is approached by a large flight of steps and a terrace, which are comparatively modern. These lead to a spacious hall, extending along the whole front of the central building. Around this hall are weapons and armour, and among the rest a great two-handed sword, said to be that which Sir Amoric Tristram, the founder of the family in this country, wielded in the twelfth century. The handle measures twenty-two inches in length; of the blade a portion at the point is broken off, but three feet nine inches of it still remain. It was obviously one of those weapons which was drawn with both hands over the shoulder of the wearer, and probably did good execution once in the hands of a stalwart warrior. Three great bells, which

are said to have once belonged to the Abbey of Howth, are preserved in the hall of the Castle. Each has an inscription around it in the old Gothic character, of beautiful form, and in relief. On the smallest of the three may be read—

JESU : CRISTE : MISSEERERE : NOIBS :

On another the legend is—

SANCTA : MARIA : ORA : PRO : NOBIS : AD : FILIUM :

On the third, the inscription differs in the form and style of the characters from the former two, and is evidently a contracted one; it begins with the name “Nicholas,” probably that of the donor of the bell, or of the maker, and runs thus—

NICHOLAS : MVN : CER : OFMEBLALNER :

Some interesting family portraits are hung round this hall: among the rest, two finely painted in the style of the Holbein school, of a bishop wearing the short beard of that period, and his wife in ruff and farthingale, with a feather fan in her hand. In the dining-room, a lofty oak-panelled apartment, which is approached from the hall by a short flight of steps, is preserved the picture which is said to represent the well-known incident in the history of the Howth family, of the forcible carrying away of its infant heir by the celebrated chieftainess, Granuaile, or Grace O'Malley. About the close of the sixteenth century, landing at Howth on her return from visiting Queen Elizabeth in London, she proceeded to the Castle, but found its gates closed, it being the hour of dinner. Indignant at such a want of hospitality, she seized the infant heir of the St. Lawrence family, whom she met on her way back to her ships, and sailed with him, a prisoner, to her own castle in the county of Mayo; nor was he restored till his father, as it is related, entered into a solemn engagement that the gates of Howth Castle should never again be closed at dinner-hour, a custom long afterwards observed with religious exactness. The ancient melody which bears the name of “Granuaile's March,” is to be found in Bunting's collection of Irish airs.

The history of the Howth family is full of romantic incident, and records the names of many individuals who, as warriors and statesmen, took an active part in the affairs of Ireland through successive generations. The founder of the family, Sir Amoric Tristram, is said to have accompanied the celebrated Sir John de Courcy, as his favourite companion in arms, from Normandy to this country, where the latter had received from Henry the Second letters patent giving him a title to such lands as he should wrest from the native Irish by the sword. The account of their landing in Ireland, and subsequent adventures, will be found detailed at great length in the curious work of Dr. Meredith Hanmer, who cites as his authority a manuscript known as the "Book of Howth." His volume appears to be a compilation of traditional stories of no very certain authority, which were collected by him in the year 1571. By recent search, the "Book of Howth," being supposed to have been lost, and which is largely quoted in Dr. Hanmer's "Chronicles of Ireland," has been found preserved among the manuscripts in the Lambeth Library. It consists of a collection of traditional stories written by an Anglo-Irish romancer in the sixteenth century, and contains a detailed account, professing to be authentic, of the adventures of Sir John de Courcy, and his friend Sir Amoric Tristram, or St. Lawrence, who, following his fortunes into Ireland, became the founder of the Howth family.

Notwithstanding the opinion of the soundest authorities of the present day, that the story of these friends rests on no *original* authority, it has been so long received as true, that it seems desirable to notice briefly Hanmer's account of it. He says that De Courcy "served King Henry the Second in all his warres, and in France he met with a worthy knight, Sir Amoricus Tristeram, who married De Courcy his sister; and whether it was derived of the lady's name, or for that they were married on St. Laurence day, ever after hee, and his posterity after him, was called Sir Amoricus de Sancto Laurentio, whence the noble house of Howth is lineally descended.

These two knights became sworn brethren in the Church of our Lady at Rouen, where solemnly they vowed to serve together, to live and dye together, and equally to divide betweene them what they wonne by the sword, or should be given them in regard of their service. Thus they continued in France, Anjou, Normandy, and England; and when Sir John de Courcy was joined in commission with Wm. Burgh, Fitz Adelme, and others, Sir Amoricus de Sancto Laurentio accompanied him into Ireland. They landed at Howth, and there fought a cruell fight by the side of a bridge, where Sir John de Courcy, being sickly, tarried about the shippe. Sir Amoricus, being chieftaine and generall of the field by land, behaved himselfe most worthily. Many were slaine on both sides, but Sir Amoricus got the victory, with the losse of seven of his owne blood, sonnes, uncles, and nephewes; whereupon, for his singular valour, and good service, there performed, that lordship was allotted unto him for his part of the conquest."

The original grant from King John to the founder of the Howth family is yet extant; and a fac-simile of it is engraved in the Reports of the Irish Record Commissioners, in 1815; and is one of the earliest and most curious examples of Letters Patent in Ireland.

Among the ancient deeds in the possession of the Corporation of Dublin, and preserved by them in their charter chest, is a very singular grant from "Almaric de Hofda," third Baron of Howth, in which he swears, under the penalty of forty shillings, that he will not lay violent hands, except in self-defence, upon any of his prelates. A copy of this deed is also preserved in Archbishop Alan's Registry in the Library of Trinity College, page 634.

In the Register of All Hallows is another charter executed by Nicholas "de Houete," said to have been the sixth Lord of Howth, for the final adjustment of a suit between him and the prior and convent of All Saints, concerning the manor of Baldowyl (Baldoyle). He seems to have had the same want of respect for the clergy which

was manifested by the third lord, and to have oppressed them, not by force, like his ancestor, but by law. If the former charters were valid, and there does not appear any reason for questioning them, sums of money from time to time were clearly extorted from the prior and convent, anxious to keep the peace with their powerful and litigious neighbour.

These lands of Baldoyle were originally granted by Dermot Mac Morrogh, King of Leinster, about the year 1166, and confirmed by Henry II. in 1171, to the Priory of All Hallows, in Dublin; and for several generations the lords of Howth maintained a claim, founded probably upon the grant of Howth by King John, and the Canons were obliged to purchase these lands twice over, from Sir Almaric and his wife, with spiritual benefits, and from Sir Nicholas, with forty marks.

In Camden's *Annals*, iii. 796, the following curious notice occurs of a member of this family, in the year 1599 :—

“ At Woodstocke, a village scituate upon Barrow, in the Queen's County, his lordship, the Earl of Essex, expected victualls a daye or two for the reliefe of Mary-burge (Maryborough), a forte of great importance. Durynge the tyme that our army incamped at Woodstocke, the rebells attempted the stealinge of some of our horses; which being perceived by S<sup>r</sup> Christofer Sentlaurence, sonne to the Lord of Hoth, he passed the ryver naked, and being followed by his men, reskewed the praye, and returned with the heade of a rebell.”

This bold knight, who was afterwards the twenty-second Baron of Howth, was one of the six friends of Essex who accompanied him on his unlucky visit to Nonesuch, on the 28th of September. As they were on the way, early in the morning, Lord Grey de Wilton, one of his bitterest enemies, passed Essex unsaluted, and on the Earl expressing his fear that he would do him some unkind office at court, St. Laurence offered to kill him on the road, and afterwards to kill Cecil in the Queen's court.

The well-known Dean Swift was a frequent guest at

the Castle of Howth; and a full-length portrait of him, painted by Bindon, in 1735, hangs in the hall. He holds in his hand a scroll, on which is written, "The Draper's fourth letter to the whole people of Ireland." At his feet is the figure of Wood, naked and prostrate; he clenches his patent for the coinage of his obnoxious copper money, which lies scattered about him.

The pleasure-grounds and gardens about the Castle are laid out with much taste, and admirably kept. There are many old trees of great beauty, and from the sheltered situation of the more recent plantations, they are vigorous and flourishing, and contribute not a little to the general picturesque effect of this demesne, contrasting finely with the wilder scenery of the mountain which appears behind them. The deep fosse which once surrounded the Castle has been partially filled up, and what remains of it is converted into a terraced garden in front of the Castle.

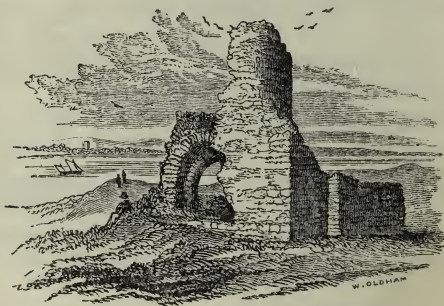
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### Ireland's Eye.



The rocky island so called lies within a short distance of Howth Harbour, nearly due north of its

entrance. Boats are readily procured, and in fine weather the sound between may be easily crossed. This island, at an early period, bore the name of Inismac-Nessan, or the island of the sons of Nessan. He was a prince of the royal family of Leinster, who had seven sons, all distinguished for sanctity and miracles. In the martyrology of Aengus they are thus noticed, at the Ides of March:—"The sons of Nessan of the island, now called Ireland's Ey, flourished in the sixth century." Colgan, in his "*Acta Sanctorum*," has given their names and the dates of their deaths. It is said that originally the island was called Inis-Ereann, that is, Eria's island, which is the name given in the "*Dinnseanchus*;" and the modern name of *Ireland's Ey* is incorrectly translated "*Oculus Hiberniæ*," by Ussher, for *Insula Hiberniæ*. This name appears to have been first given to it by the Danes, in whose language *ey* or *ei* denotes island. The same people translated or altered the names of other islands near Dublin; as *Dalk-ey*, for the *Deilg-Inis* of the Irish; *Lamb-ey*, for *Inis Reachrainn*, &c. To these may possibly be added the name of *Angles-ey* in the principality of Wales, and many others.



The remains of a very early church, with a portion of its round-tower belfry, are still to be seen here.

The doorway, constructed with a semicircular arch, springing from square impost, and having its sides inclining towards each other, was, as usual, placed in the west front of the church; an engraving of it, as it existed till very lately, is given in Mr. Petrie's "Essay on the Round Towers of Ireland," and he there expresses his opinion that its erection may, with every appearance of certainty, be referred to the middle of the seventh century, when the three sons of Nessan—Dichuill, Munissa, and Neslug—flourished, and gave name to the island. With the exception of a modern Martello tower, this ruined church, or oratory, is the only building now visible. Yet some inequalities in the surface of the ground close to the church exhibit indistinct evidence of the foundations of some houses or other structures once having existed there.

Nothing can exceed the wild beauty of this island, rising, as it does, by a gradual ascent from the spot where the visitor usually lands, in Carrigeen Bay—the low wall of the ruined church in the foreground, and behind it the hill clothed with heather, fern, wild plants, and lichens, of every variety of tint; while over all rise the rocky cliffs, which, on the north side, descend precipitously to the sea, above which the highest point rises to 350 feet. The detached rocks are in some places of great size and fantastic forms, and there are several caves into which the sea dashes, and which can be seen only from a boat in calm weather. Of those rocks several are distinguished by appropriate names. A group at the north-east angle of the island have been called the Stags; others, the Rowan rocks. These lie between the Samphire-hole and the Long-hole, to which a fearful notoriety not long ago was given by a tragedy of atrocious character. No part of the island has been cultivated, and though containing fifty-three acres, it produces but scanty grazing in the spring and summer months. In rough weather the sea breaks into magnificent sheets of foam over the Thulla rocks, which stretch away southward towards Howth, and terminate

in the little islet from which they take their name, of no great height, but having a verdant surface of nearly an acre in extent.

Referring to the notices of the early history of Ireland's Eye recorded by our ancient Annalists, two of them may here be appropriately cited—

“*Goir Criorc*, 897. *Cacht for Galluib Athachiað in Inir mic Neppain.*”—“The foreigners, or Danes, of Atheliath (Dublin) were besieged in Inis-mic-Nessan;” or, as it may be translated, “were hemmed in, and reduced to great straits.”

“*Goir Criorc*, 960. *Loingear meic Amlaib 7 na Ladgmann do ðeacð i-nEpin, co ro ortatar Conaille 7 Ertar co hInir mic Neppain.*”—“The fleet of the son of Amlaibh (Aulave) and of the Ladgmans came to Ireland, and plundered Conaille and Eder (Howth) with, or, as far as, Inis-mic-Nessan.”

In the thirteenth century the original prebendal church was removed from Ireland's Eye to the main land by Luke, Archbishop of Dublin.

At the close of the fifteenth century a suit in Equity was carried on in the Irish Court of Chancery, which established the right of the then Archbishop of Dublin to the possession of Ireland's Eye. The decree, pronounced in Easter Term, 34 Henry VIII., states, that “matter of variance was depending betwene the Moste Reverend Father in God, George, Archbushop of Dublyn and Primate of Ireland, playntyf, and Sir Christopher Howthe, knight, lorde of Howthe, defendant, concernynge the right interest and possessyon of a certeyne iland, callyd Irelandisia, or Ireland's Eye.” It proceeds to say that, by “diverse and sundry antyke dedes, evidences, and wrytyngs, on behalf of the said Archebushop, shewyd before the lorde Chancellor, yt dothe apere that the very right, title, interest, inheritance, and possession of the said Ireland's Eye did apertayne unto the said Archebushop and his successors, and that the saide lorde of Houthe, ne none other of his ancestors, were seasid or possessyde, or had any other right, title, possessyon, or

interest, but only at wylle, and by sufferance of the said Archebushop, and his predecessors, payinge therefore, yearly, such rent and profyt as was betwynthem agreed." The decree then directs that the Archbishop shall have the possession of the island, "until such time as the said Sir Chrystofer, his heires or assignes, should shew better mater for his clayme and title which he pretendyd unto the same Iland."

In Ireland's Eye it is said there was long preserved a celebrated manuscript copy of the Four Gospels, known by the designation of "The Garland of Howth." It was held in such esteem and veneration as to have been used for the administration of oaths, as various shrines and reliquaries have been at all periods. Archbishop Alen, speaking of this book, says, "good men scarcely dared to take an oath upon it, for fear of the judgment of God being immediately shown on those who should favour themselves."



## The Village of Howth.

This little town is of irregular form, consisting chiefly of houses which run along the high ground overhanging the harbour, whence the main street turns up with a gradual ascent towards the higher parts of the hill. Traces of a more ancient village, to which tradition points as the site of an earlier town, bearing the same name, are still to be seen in a valley at a short distance behind the demesne of Howth Castle. Till within a few years ago, the inhabitants were chiefly fishermen, not a few of whom held their cabins rent-free, and in many instances availed themselves of the facilities which the solitary character of the place afforded for smuggling. The progress of time, and the formation of good roads, have, however, changed the aspect of matters, and Howth has long been a favourite bathing-place. The Royal Hotel, in the centre of the town, is greatly frequented by families during the summer months, and

of late years even throughout the winter. It has long borne a high character for combining much comfort with economy. The fine bracing air of Howth, even on its northern side, is fully appreciated; and for persons of delicate constitutions the southern side affords a climate approximating in character to that of Devonshire. At the present season, and in consequence of the increasing number of visitors which every succeeding year has of late brought to this charming locality, this hotel has been greatly improved, and preparations made to afford more ample accommodation. To meet the requirements of more casual visitors and tourists, a second establishment for their accommodation is now placed close to the railway terminus, to which the name of "The St. Lawrence Hotel" has been given.

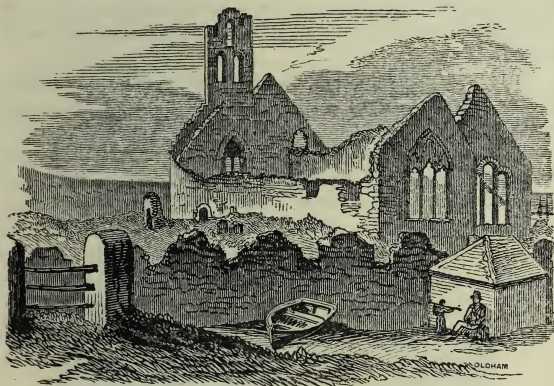
The population of the village is about 700, exclusive of casual visitors. The little village church we have already mentioned stands near the entrance of the demesne of Howth Castle; a large Roman Catholic chapel, a Dispensary, Constabulary and Police Station, and a National School, are in the centre of the town. In its immediate vicinity are many houses, which are usually let for the bathing season, and some of them occupy most charming sites, commanding marine views of the most varying and unequalled beauty.

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### The Abbey of Howth.

On the high ground which overhangs the harbour stands the ruins of this venerable abbey, in the centre of a burying-ground, surrounded by an embattled wall, partially covered with ivy. It is said to have been founded in the year 1235, when the prebendal church was removed from Ireland's Eye to the mainland, by Luke, Archbishop of Dublin, and was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. The western door stands beneath the

belfry, still exhibiting the pointed arches, in which the bells were once suspended. At the opposite end is a triplet window of not inelegant form, and in the chancel is the altar-tomb of Christopher, the twentieth Lord of Howth, who died in 1589, and his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Plunket, of Beaulieu, near Drogheda. Both are represented by recumbent figures,—his effigy in the armour of the period, and his wife attired in the female costume of the same date. The sides of the tomb



are divided into enriched Gothic panels, containing shields charged with the armorial bearings of the St. Lawrences, Plunkets, Casacks, Flemings, Butlers, and other families with whom they intermarried. The inscription on the edge of this monument is so much time-worn as to be now only partially legible. To the original church an aisle was added along its northern side, at the eastern end of which is a window of three lights, each having a flat Burgundian arch of extremely simple form, which clearly indicates the erection of this additional aisle to have been towards the close of the sixteenth century. It was doubtless the work of the same architect by whom the remarkable monastic house which stands on the verge of the burying-ground was built.

This house, usually called the College of Howth, cannot fail to arrest attention, and is well deserving of minute inspection. The entrance door, opening from the southern side of the building into a small quadrangular space, though greatly dilapidated, retains much of its original beauty of form; so also does a large window to the right of the doorway. These, as well as the smaller windows in the principal front towards the street, all have the flattened arch, similar in character to the triplet window in the northern aisle of the abbey, so that this structure must clearly be referred to the same period.

In the interior of the abbey are two flat tombstones, having floriated crosses incised, though not deeply, and without any inscriptions. These, with some recessed aumbreys, a southern porch, and a trefoiled window in the western gable of the northern aisle, are the features of the building which will chiefly attract observation. When the northern aisle was added to the original church, the entire roof was altered and expanded so as to include the whole beneath its span.

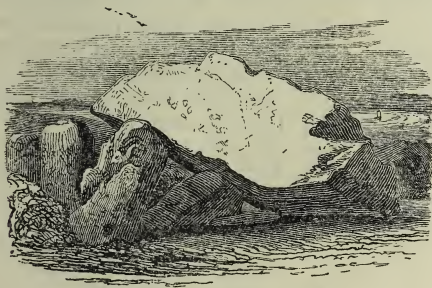


## The Hill of Howth.

From the upper end of the town the old road over the Hill turns to the right, and, leading up a steep ascent, soon presents, as we look back, from time to time, a succession of the most charming and extensive views of the town and harbour, with its lighthouse, and the islands of Ireland's Eye and Lamb-eye. To the left lies the level sandy isthmus which connects Howth with the mainland; the village of Baldoyle, the strand of Portmarnock, and, still further off, Portrane and Donebate. Northward the horizon is bounded by the undulating line of the Mourne mountains, beyond which the sea and sky appear blended together; while, as the eye travels

up the channel, in clear weather occasional glimpses are had of the distant coast of Wales.

As the road ascends, the rugged and picturesque summit of the Ben of Howth appears close at hand, the highest point of the Loughoreen hills being 563 feet above the water level. On the right is the Dun Hill, on the top of which a signal-post stands upon a cairn of stones. A short distance from the town, a pathway winds away among the hills towards the steep rocky cliffs of Carric-more, which overhang the demesne of Howth Castle, and at the foot of which is a cromlech, of considerable size. It consists of a ponderous mass of rude rock, of an oblong shape, about fourteen feet in length, and twelve in breadth, supported partially on several stones, of which some are seven feet in height: they are, apparently, placed without any order. The superincumbent mass has slid from its supporters to



the north side, and rests with one edge on the ground. The opinion of the best-informed archæologists of the present day is, that these monuments, long known by the designation of "Druid's Altars," are, in truth, sepulchral chambers, which have been stripped of the cairns or piles of stones by which they were originally covered. It is said that this cromlech has been long known to the people of Howth by the name of "Fin's Quoit;" and is stated, by an ancient legend, to have been chucked into

its present position by Fin Mac-Coul, when engaged in combat with a Danish warrior.

A new road, made a few years ago, having a more gradual ascent, turns to the left from the centre of the town, and takes a more easterly direction. It commands a view towards the north, similar to that already described, for a considerable distance, till it approaches the site of the old lighthouse, when the Bay of Dublin suddenly bursts upon the view. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the great marine prospect that now spreads itself before the spectator. The long line of coast of the county of Wicklow, Bray Head, the hills of Killiney and Rochestown, the Greater and Lesser Sugarloaf, the county of Dublin mountains, are all arranged in such a position as to form the most picturesque outline. At the foot of this chain lie the Island of Dalkey, the noble harbour of Kingstown, the villages of Blackrock and Booterstown, studding the southern shore of the bay; in front of these, the South-wall, with its lighthouse, built in 1768; the Pigeon-house Fort; and lastly the city of Dublin: all displaying themselves so as to form a panoramic scene of great beauty. This new road then sweeps round the southern side of the Hill of Howth, and by it the tourist is conducted to the Sutton Railway Station. But of the northern side of the Hill it will be necessary to speak more in detail.

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### Balscadden Bay.

A little beyond the eastern pier of the harbour lies this little bay, which is the favourite bathing-place of the inhabitants of Howth. It is closed in on every side by high ground; and the purest and clearest waves, with a bright shingly strand, afford, in the sparkling sunshine of a summer morning, every imaginable temptation to those who love this invigorating source of health. A road, which was chiefly used some time ago in drawing stones

from the Kilrock quarries, has of late been much improved; and there is now a most lovely and healthful walk or drive for a short distance along the high ground overhanging the bay. This road terminates at these quarries; and at this point the NEW PATH commences, which has thrown open to the pedestrian the magnificent scenery of the cliffs upon the eastern side of the Hill. Nothing can exceed the beauty of Balscadden Bay of a fine autumnal night, when the sea breaks with a continual dash upon the pebbly beach, sparkling in the bright moonlight, and the sounds of human life are hushed into silence, or only heard faintly as the night-wind carries them from the distant village.

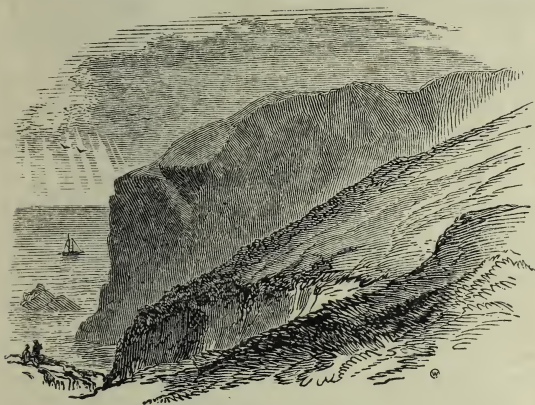
At some distance below the road beyond Balscadden Bay is the singular precipice called Puck's Rock. It seems to have been detached by some convulsion, which also cleft it nearly in two by a deep perpendicular fissure. On one side, and near the summit, is the rude representation of a colossal human figure, of which tradition preserves the following story:—St. Nellan, whose sanctity is still venerated by the people of Howth, was assailed in his retreat on Ireland's Eye by an evil spirit, who, to terrify him the more, assumed a frightful gigantic form. The saint, by good fortune, was reading the holy book called the Garland of Howth; as his enemy approached he struck him on the forehead with the book, and drove him with such force against the opposite coast that he split the rock, and fixed the evil spirit firmly in the fissure, where he has remained for centuries struggling to extricate himself. The imaginary figure is best to be seen from a boat; but not many have courage to venture within the chasm.

## The New Path.

Few persons who ever made a sojourn of any length upon the Hill of Howth were ignorant of the boldness of the magnificent and precipitous cliffs, or of the wild beauty of the coast scenery which displays itself at every turn around the eastern extremity of this rocky peninsula. The solitary and sublime grandeur of these rugged precipices, worn into the most fantastic forms by the ceaseless action of the element to whose fury they are at all times exposed, the unlimited variety of exquisite tints produced by the wild and luxuriant vegetation, present attractions and afford enjoyment to the cultivated mind of a lofty and noble character, unknown and unappreciated by those whose hearts turn coldly from nature. The pleasures to be derived from the contemplation of scenery which we vainly seek words to describe, are now accessible to thousands by whom they were hitherto unattainable, from the formation of a fine pathway which has been constructed as nearly as possible along the verge of the cliffs. It is laid out in such a way as to conduct the visitor of Howth, in its undulating course, to all the most picturesque and interesting points of view. Commencing at the top of the steep ascent into the quarries of Kilrock, it sweeps past the rocky height whose rugged form is seen to such advantage from Balscadden, rising to 270 feet above the sea. If time permits, the widely expanded ocean view from the top would well repay the toil of the ascent; and the wild plants, which are here to be found in the utmost profusion and luxuriance, will afford a rich treat to the botanist.

Advancing along the path, which ascends with a gradual inclination, the precipitous cliff called the Nose of Howth now comes into view; in some places, nearly perpendicular, it goes down with a sheer descent into deep water. This headland forms the north-eastern angle of Howth, and from this point the Path begins to

turn to the southward. As the pedestrian follows the undulations of the Path, new features present themselves. The rocks and headlands, distinguished many of them by



names having usually some fanciful reference to their general form, rapidly succeed each other. Fishing-boats are seen ploughing their way out to sea, and larger vessels and steamers find deep water, which enables them, in calm weather, to keep close in shore.

Not far from the Castlena Rock is the spot where the ill-fated steamer, the "Victoria," in the midst of a snow-storm upon the night of the 14th of February, 1855, first struck the rocks. At a short distance to the right of the Path is the site of an old lead mine already adverted to; and from the quarries in several places along the shore some of the finest stone used for macadamizing the streets of the metropolis is supplied. The Baily Lighthouse now comes in sight, and forms a most interesting object, standing out conspicuously on the projecting headland, called, from its constant verdure, "the green Baily." From the rocky base of this headland it was that the "Victoria" steamer was backed off into deep water, and, sinking within a few yards of the shore, became a total wreck.

The old lighthouse stood at a considerable height above the course of the Path, upon a platform which still remains; and this, doubtless, was one of the two lighthouses built by Robert Readinge in the reign of Chas. II. It was abandoned for the modern Baily Lighthouse, having been found inefficient from the loftiness of its situation, which was nearly 300 feet above the sea level. This rendered it subject to being obscured by clouds and mists, while lower situations were clear and well-defined. Accordingly, in 1814, the present lighthouse was built by the Ballast Board, and constructed according to the most approved models of the time. Its form is that of a truncated cone, supporting a lantern, which exhibits a fixed bright light, the illumination being produced by a set of reflectors ground to the parabolic form, in the foci of which twenty large oil-lamps are placed. An outer gallery, lightly but securely railed, surrounds the dome. Connected with the building there is a large room, which opens on a platform, where an excellent telescope is kept, by means of which the shoals which obstruct the entrance to the bay may be distinctly observed, namely, the Great Kish, and the Bennet and Burford Banks, which are links of the chain extending along the Wicklow and Wexford coasts, and called the Irish grounds. These, though not visible above the water, are distinctly marked in stormy weather by the surf which breaks over them with uncommon violence, and form a dangerous obstruction to the approach of the bay.

Nothing can be more strikingly picturesque than the position of this lighthouse as seen from the Path, standing boldly out upon a precipitous rock whose vertex is elevated more than one hundred feet above the waves which dash against its base. As seen from the north, this rock seems almost insulated, forming the extreme point of a long and narrow promontory of still higher altitude which stretches out to sea, having cliffs equally steep on both sides, so that the most striking and romantic views of the lighthouse can be had from various points, in some commanding the horizon-bound sea, and in others

the Bay of Dublin, with all its varied and delightful scenery of wooded country and mountain ranges.

From this point the New Path turns inland, and terminates at the new road, a little below the height on which the old Lighthouse stood.



## The Baile of Howth.

This spot derives its modern appellation from the word baile, which enters so generally into Irish topographical names, and has been the subject of so much



learned conjecture. It has been translated *oppidum* by Archbishop Ussher, in his "Primordia;" *villa, vicus, vel burgum*, by Colgan, in his "Acta Sanctorum;" and *villa, pagus, vel villata*, by Roderic O'Flaherty, in his "Ogygia." Baxter, in his "Etymological Glossary," says its origin is to be sought from a more remote source: whatever was round, particularly the *head*, was called by the ancients

*Bal* or *Bel*. From passages in the "Book of Kells," and other early Irish MSS., it is clear that it is used to express a *habitation*. It would be quite out of place here to go deeper in the subject; enough has been said to show that, in its primary meaning, it signifies a circular fortified abode. Certain it is that, like the cognate Greek word *πολις*, it was first applied to a fortification on the top of a hill; and various modifications of it are to be found in the Celtic and Indo-European languages to express objects into which the idea of rotundity enters.

Tradition concurs with the testimony of the best informed authorities in assigning the Baily as the site of the residence of the monarch *Criomthan* (pronounced *Criffan*), a hero celebrated in ancient Irish history, whose death is stated, in the "Annals of the Four Masters," to have taken place in the ninth year of the Christian era, and from whom it was called *Dun Criomthann*, i. e. *Criffan's Fort*. He closed his life here, after returning from a famous expedition, from which he brought back with him a prodigious quantity of spoils which he had won in battle, "among which were a golden chariot and a chess-board," also the famous "*cCebairġ cCriomtáinn*, which was a beautiful cloak, embroidered with gold," and celebrated in Irish romantic stories. "He brought also a conqueror's sword, inlaid with many serpents of refined massy gold; a shield with bosses of bright silver; a spear, from the wound inflicted by which no one ever recovered; a sling, from which no erring shot was discharged; two greyhounds, with a silver chain between them, which chain was worth three hundred cumhals; with many other precious articles." Such is the account given in the "Annals of the Four Masters;" and similar details are given in numberless historical poems, in which, as customary with all nations at this early period, events were recorded in metrical language in order that their memory might the more easily be preserved.

The *Leabhar-Gabhala*, or *Book of Conquests* of the *O'Clerys*, contains a poem of seventy-two verses, ascribed

to King Crimhthann himself, in which he describes the precious articles he brought into Ireland on this occasion.

It begins, *Má do cooh an eachtra n-an*: i. e. "fortunate it was that I went on this delightful adventure." But no mention is made of the countries into which he went. It is fabled that he was accompanied on this expedition by his *bainleannán*, or female sprite, named Nair, from whom he was called *Níadh Nairi*, i. e. Nair's hero. O'Flaherty, in his "Ogygia," says that this Nair was King Crimhthann's Queen.

A. D. 646. "The battle of Dun Crimhthainn was gained by Conall and Ceallach, the two sons of Maelcobha, over Aenghus, son of Domhnall; and Aenghus was slain in this battle; and there was also slain in this same battle Cathasach, son of Domhnall Breac."

In the "Annals of Ulster" this battle is mentioned under the year 649; and its memory has been perpetuated in later times by the words of one of Moore's most popular melodies.

Before the erection of the modern Lighthouse by the Ballast Board of Dublin, in the year 1814, the fosse and lines of circumvallation of this ancient fortress were clearly defined; but, in the progress of the works, they were, in a great measure, obliterated. Enough remains to show to the practised eye of the archæologist that it consisted of two distinct divisions, the greater and the lesser Baily, each fortified by a deep fosse and earthen wall, beyond which was placed the *Cahir*, or citadel, on the outmost conical projection of the rock; so that, taking into consideration the military resources of that early period, a stronger position cannot easily be conceived.

The monarch who has thus left his name to this ancient fortress is stated to have been buried beneath a cairn on one of the loftiest points of the Hill, and it has been supposed that a vast heap of stones, which once formed a great Cairn, long since ruthlessly rifled, on the summit of Slieve Martin, marks the site of his grave. Upon a closer examination, however, it is found that there are several great cairns or mounds placed in com-

manding situations, and various lesser ones are also to be traced. So that while it may be a matter of regret to the inquirer that some doubt hangs about the precise situation of the last resting-place of the hero, this very uncertainty may, on the other hand, be the means of protecting his ashes from being disturbed by the too curious search of modern archæologists.

The following verses, embodying some high and noble thoughts, are from the pen of one who, full in enthusiasm and fine feeling, was taken from us before the calmer and more sober judgment which age brings had pruned the wild exuberance of youthful and too ardent love of his country. Few can read without truest sympathy and admiration the "Victor's Burial," by the late Thomas Davis, a little poem, the subject of which was suggested by the historical events and places above mentioned. It begins with the following lines:—

"Wrap him in his banner, the best shroud of the brave;  
Wrap him in his *Onchu*, and take him to his grave.  
Shrine him in *Ben-Edair*, with his face toward the foe,  
As an emblem that not Death our defiance can lay low;  
Let him look across the waves from the promontory's breast,  
To menace back the East and to sentinel the West.  
Sooner shall the Channel waves the iron coast cut thro'  
Than the spirit he has left yield, Easterlings, to you!—  
Let his coffin be the Hill; let the eagles of the sea  
Chorus with the surges round the *Tureev* of the free!"



## The South Side of Howth.

As the road now advances along the southern side of the Hill, the Bay of Dublin expands itself, and is nowhere seen to greater advantage than from various points along this road. On the sloping ground which descends towards the shore, stands the Baily Tavern, which has been the favoured spot chosen occasionally for the meetings of some choice and kindred spirits, whose cultivated

reunions are known to afford the enjoyment of social talent of the highest order. It is not our intention to withdraw the veil which "the Mystics," as they are denominated, have, with good taste, thrown around their literary meetings; but it is known that many of the brilliant sallies, in prose or lyrical verse, which delight the world in the pages of our popular periodical literature, have been traced, in their origin, to the inspiration derived from the social pleasures which have been shared in this spot, and elsewhere, by some of the most distinguished men of our day, who, it is believed, have not had reason to diminish their opinion of the brilliancy of Irish genius by their participation in the mystical meetings of the Society of which we are not at liberty here more fully to speak. Various pathways here diverge to the right, leading up to the great level heath above; and above Carricbrack Hill, the site of a cairn, of considerable size, may yet be traced. A scene of greater wildness cannot be imagined than this heath presents. A more attractive direction for the pedestrian to take will be along the cliffs upon the sea-shore. These are easily gained by descending through the fields which lie beneath the group of houses which form the little village of Sancer. From the broad strand a view is obtained of a long line of cliffs on either side. To the east, the Lion's-head is close at hand; and still nearer, in the opposite direction, is the Hippy Hole, and the remarkable rocks so well known as "The Needles." Proceeding southwards along the heights, Drumleck Point is approached, and beneath a height once occupied by Drumleck Castle, of which nothing but the name now remains. And here the rocky shore presents the most singular and fantastic forms, indented by fissures and caves, some accessible only at low water. In these caves are found some of the rarest specimens of wild plants; and about the rocks, which are covered with lichens of the most varied hues, the search of the botanist will be rewarded by some curious ferns: of these, the *Asplenium marinum*, so called because usually found near the sea-coast, was, till recently, supposed to be peculiar to this

locality ; it has, however, been discovered in the Isle of Man, and also in the county of Kerry. One of the largest of these caves is designated " The Woar Hole," from the sea-weed found in it ; while to others about it various similar descriptive names have been given. Above these cliffs are some charming summer residences, commanding beautiful views of the Bay of Dublin, and enjoying a climate of the greatest salubrity. In truth, the whole range of the southern side of Howth has been long known as possessing advantages with regard to climate scarcely yielding to that of the most favoured spots in the south of Europe.

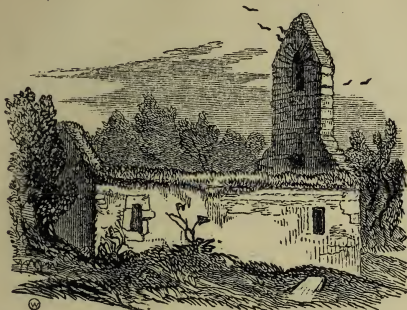
From the descent at Carricbrack the road now advances, leaving on the right the rocky heights which bound the black heath already mentioned, and on the left the cultivated ground which slopes with a gradual descent towards the shores of the bay. About two miles further the road divides, the older road still descending to the left, while a more level and newer road proceeds with a gradual fall in the direction of Sutton.



### St. Fintan's.

To the left of the new road, as it descends towards Sutton, is the little ruined chapel and burying-ground dedicated to St. Fintan, not far from which is his well. This building attracts attention by its belfry, which stands above the western door, a small pointed arch. The interior measures little more than sixteen feet in length, and eight in breadth, and has few indications of any remote antiquity. All the windows are small ; the one at the east end alone has an ornamental character : the rest are as simple in their form as possible. This little church or oratory is, however, so well placed, and surrounded by such a charming landscape, that it forms a very interesting object. There are so many Irish saints of this name, that it is a matter of difficulty to

ascertain to which of them this little chapel was dedicated. In the “Codex Kilkenniensis,” a curious and



exquisitely written manuscript, preserved in Archbishop Marsh's Library, there is a life of St. Fintan to be found, which begins thus:—

“Sanctus Abbas Fintanus vir vitæ venerabilis, de provincia Laginensium oriundus fuit. Pater ejus vocabatur Crymthan: mater vero Findnat. Quæ cum esset pregnans et proxima partui, ecce angelus Domini venit ad eam, dicens, ‘Recede ab hominibus in quidam locum secretum, et esto ibi sola donec infantulum sanctum parias.’”

Here the name of his father Crimhthan, or Criffan, seems, in some degree at least, to connect this Saint Fintan with Howth; his festival was kept on the 21st October; and if any of the inhabitants now survived who could recollect the day which was formerly observed at this little oratory in honour of the saint, the identification would be complete.

Looking eastwards from St. Fintan's church, the rocky height which overhangs the demesne of Howth Castle appears to great advantage. The face of this rock is very steep, and vast fragments have fallen from it, and still more seem ready to roll down. In the low ground at its base stands the cromlech already spoken of. To the

south, the Sutton manganese and lime-works appear close to the beach, on the strand in front of which are the Sutton oyster-beds. The road now runs along the shore, scarcely raised above the level of high tides; and turning to the right the tourist crosses the great high road from Dublin to Howth, and in a few minutes reaches the Sutton railway station, from which his return to Dublin is easily accomplished.

The circuit of the Hill of Howth having now been completed, it remains for the tourist to decide whether he will return to the metropolis by the railway, or follow the windings of the shore by Kilbarrack and Raheny. If time shall not be of moment, he will find the approach to Dublin, by "the green lanes" of Clontarf, full of the quiet and peaceful charms afforded by the well-sheltered pleasure-grounds of suburban residences. And if these pages have afforded him any additional means of enjoying the time spent in traversing the localities which they have but feebly treated of, the writer will have the gratification of thinking he has put into action the feeling which a living poet has embodied in the following beautiful lines on "A Walk by the Bay of Dublin:"—

"While travelled poets pen their polished rhymes  
In praise of distant lands and southern climes;  
While tourists tell of gorgeous realms afar,  
How blest by heaven—how beautiful they are!  
While every scene but moderately fair  
Shines on their page, as if all heaven were there!  
Scenes which, if viewed by their discerning eyes  
Within the circle of their native skies,  
Though decked with all that Nature's hands bestow,  
Were passed unheeded as too mean and low!  
While thus are praised, in learned rhyme and prose,  
Italia's sun and wild Helvetia's snows,  
The trackless forest, and the teeming mine,  
Ice at the Poles, and earthquakes at the Line—  
One who, yet free from fashion's freezing zone,  
Admires not every country, but—his own!—  
His heart unchilled, and his impartial eye  
Dare to be just to scenes which round him lie!"

D. F. MAC CARTHY.

## The Botany of Howth.

The variety of plants to be found on the Hill of Howth is almost endless. The following is an enumeration of the principal. On and about the Hill generally are to be seen—

*Nardus stricta*, mat grass.

*Crithmum maritimum*, samphire, whose leaves are an excellent pickle used for sauces, and are by many eaten raw in salads.

*Oxalis acetosella*, wood sorrel.

*Spergula arvensis*, corn spurrey, which, though here accounted a troublesome weed, is in Flanders, Germany, and the North of Europe used as fodder, while poultry are feed with its seed.

*Digitalis purpurea*, fox-glove.

*Hypericum humifusum*, trailing St. John's wort.

*Carduus marianus*, milk thistle.

*Tanacetum vulgare*, tansy.

*Artemisia absinthium*, common wormwood.

*Iris fœtidissima*, with its heavy blue flower, commonly called roast-beef plant, from the circumstance of the leaves, when bruised, smelling like roasted beef.

*Juncus uliginosus*, *juncus squarrosus*, and *juncus acutus*, bulbous rush, moss rush, and sharp rush.

In the valleys and marshy places are found—

*Veronica scutellata*, narrow-leaved speedwell.

*Scirpus setaceus*, bristle-stalked club-rush.

*Eleocharis palustris*, creeping spike-rush.

*Eriophorum polystachion*, broad-leaved cotton grass.

*Melica cœrulea*, purple melic grass, a plant of which the inhabitants of some of the western islands make ropes for fishing-nets, as it is found to bear the water for a long time without rotting.

*Angallis tenella*, bog pimpernel.

*Drosera rotundifolia*, round-leaved sundew.

*Peplis portula*, water purslane.

*Comarum palustre*, marsh cinque-foil, bearing a fruit somewhat like that of the strawberry.

*Orchis conopsea*, aromatic palmate orchis.

*Carex pendula*, *carex cespitosa*, and *carex hirta*, pendulous, turf, and hairy sedges, &c.

*Sium latifolium*, broad-leaved water parsnip, whose roots are deadly poison, fatal both to men and cattle.

*Sium inundatum*, least water parsnip.

On the mountain dry pastures are found—

*Veronica officinalis*, common speedwell.

*Agrostis vulgaris*, fine bent-grass.

*Holcus mollis*, creeping soft grass, one of the most troublesome weeds that infest light dry soils.

*Festuca ovina*, sheep's fescue grass.

*Gentiana campestris*, field gentian.

On banks above the sea-shore—

*Scilla verna*, vernal squill.

*Scilla nutans*, harebell squill.

*Epilobium tetragonum*, square-stalked willow herb.

On the hedges and bushy places—

*Lonicera periclymenum*, common honeysuckle.

*Vicia cracca*, tufted vetch.

In the corn-fields—

*Lolium temulentum*, bearded darnel, an herb of an intoxicating quality.

*Cynoglossum officinale*, common hound's-tongue.

*Lamium incisum*, cut-leaved dead nettle.

*Papaver somniferum*, white poppy.

About the old Abbey—

*Parietaria officinalis*, wall pellitory.

On the rocks, and in their fissures—

*Airia flexuosa*, wavy mountain hair-grass.

*Statice armeria*, sea-pink.

*Sedum acre*, wall pepper, a brilliant little flower, conspicuous enough about midsummer, and for some time afterwards on walls, roofs, and dry, barren, or sandy

ground, which it clothes as it were with a cloth of gold, in defiance of the drought and the most scorching sun. The beautiful little stone crop, with its bright blossoms, is also to be found in great luxuriance in various places.

*Geranium sanguineum*, bloody cranesbill.

*Lichen perellus*, *lichen saxatilis*, crab's-eye, and gray stone lichen, and others.

*Crithmum maritimum*, the samphire, mentioned by Shakspeare in his description of sea-cliffs.

In the woods, heaths, and marshy ground—

*Vaccinium myrtillus*, bilberry, part of the autumn food of grouse. Bilberries are also used in tarts, &c.

*Erica cinerea*, fine-leaved heath, with some varieties.

*Orobis tuberosus*, heath-pea.

About the Sutton side of the Hill—

*Viola tricolor*, pansy violet.

*Narthesium ossifragum*, Lancashire asphodel.

*Ervum hirsutum*, hairy tare, a pernicious intruder on fields of corn.

*Melampyrum pratense*, yellow cow-wheat.

*Lysimachia nemorum*, yellow pimpernel.

On the southern beach—

*Statice limonium*, sea-lavender.

*Beta maritima*, sea-beet, flowering in August, and accounted a good substitute for spinach.

*Crambe maritimum*, sea-cale.

*Triticum junceum*, rushy wheat grass, a plant of great importance in districts subject to inundations of the sea, which nature apparently designed it to retard.

A much more extended list of wild plants might be made out, with a due exertion of industrious investigation; but it is supposed that the foregoing enumeration of some of the principal botanical productions of Howth will afford considerable assistance to any one desirous of prosecuting the subject in the various situations which have been indicated.

## Geology of Howth.

The whole of this peninsula may be divided into two distinct geological epochs: one represented by a series of strata, consisting of numerous alternations of sandy or siliceous grit, with argillaceous or clayey depositions; the other comprehending the whole of the limestone district, and consisting of the lower or shaly beds. The Hill is, in the main, composed of quartz rock and clay-slate, a stone of an intermediate character being frequently found interposed between them. These rocks form beds of varying thickness, and frequently alternate with each other. There are twelve of these alternations upon the great scale, and smaller ones almost without number. A huge bed of porphyritic greenstone is visible on the southern side, running from the water-edge into the heart of the Hill, and separating at some distance into two lesser veins, which gradually diverge from each other. On the south side of Howth, or that which looks towards the metropolis, other objects of geological interest are to be seen. A bed of dolomite, accompanied by grayish limestone, which at first appears at a few points to the south of Skerries, after dipping beneath the sands of Portmarnock and Malahide, re-appears near the harbour of Howth. This same bed, sweeping round the base of the promontory, is next found near Sutton, at its south-western point. Here it is quarried, and from hence, at a recent period, it was exported to England, where the magnesian earth was extracted from it, and converted into a series of valuable preparations. The vein of compact grey ore of manganese at Sutton is mixed with brown ironstone and hæmatites; specimens of which are found among the rocks of the coast, near the mine.

A variety of the earthy black cobalt ore of Werner has been found here, in the form of a coating of a rich blue colour, which incrusts the fissures of a rock of slate clay, approaching to whet-slate. In this substance the

presence of the oxides of cobalt and manganese has been ascertained, and the discovery of it indicates the probability of the existence of other more valuable ores of cobalt in that neighbourhood.

The limestone of Howth is much prized, and has been exported to various places, and even to Holland heretofore by the Dutch, who set a high value upon it. It bears a high polish, equal to marble, and some specimens exhibit curious vermiform impressions. Among the rocks near the Green Baily fine specimens of carbonate of lime were found, crystallized generally in six-sided prisms, terminated by pyramids, and tinged with ochre.

Galæna was found in scattered specimens in excavating the rocks to form the piers of Howth harbour. It was of the cubic kind, and mixed with spots of copper, but no regular vein of either was discovered on the shore. In blasting the rocks, however, which obstructed the anchorage in the harbour, a vein of lead was discovered under water, and considerable specimens were raised, of a quality supposed to be so rich as to make it an object to work it.

In 1451, Sir Christopher, the fourteenth Baron of Howth, was empowered by Act of Parliament to search for a mine within this lordship, as well for tin as for lead ore, and to receive the profits thereof to his own use during the term of three years, at 6s. 8d. per annum, if it should be found. Again, about the year 1754, a lead mine was discovered, which promised to be productive. It was situated about midway between the Castle and the old Lighthouse. At a spot close to the Castlena Rock, on the eastern shore of the Hill, was a lead mine, once worked to a considerable extent; its site is marked on the maps of the Ordnance Survey. Gold is also said to have been found about the same locality, but in such minute quantities as to afford little hope that search for it could be remunerative.

Fine porcelain clay has been found upon the southern side of Howth, which consists principally of quartz rock. It exists in large concretionary masses, or highly irre-

gular beds, and appears to have reached its present position by the transport of water. It was discovered by Mr. R. Mallet, of Dublin, and extensively brought by him into use for the manufacture of crucibles. It is found of every degree of fineness, from a coarse gritty mass of decomposing pebbles, with occasional large nodules of friable felspar, to that of an impalpable colourless clay, like that of Dorsetshire, known as pipe-clay. This is soft, sectile, adheres to the tongue, and forms a strongly adhesive and plastic mass with water, capable of being moulded upon the potter's wheel into the finest forms. It bakes perfectly white, or occasionally of the slightest possible rosy tint of white. Some of the masses of this mineral are strongly discoloured by iron and manganese, and imbedded in the finest parts are occasionally found a few fragments of marine shells and bits of wood. The clay, as dug out, does not effervesce with acids, and is insoluble in them; it yields no soluble matter to water, and appears to contain no alkali in any specimens yet examined. The less fully decomposed portions of the clay may contain alkali in a soluble condition, and hence render the material valuable as a manure. Although hitherto only brought into use by Mr. R. Mallet for the manufacture of crucibles, this clay is of very great economic value, and capable of being used for the manufacture of the finer descriptions of pottery, or even of porcelain.

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## Conclusion.

There is, perhaps, no other city in the British empire that can boast of such a variety of picturesque landscapes as are comprised within a circuit of ten or twelve miles of our metropolis. Other cities may exceed us in the beauty or magnitude of some particular feature, but in diversity of scenic beauty we may defy competition. There is scarcely any variety of natural scenery that will not be found within this limited circumference.

Notwithstanding, however, this profusion of attractions to tempt us to the purest and most valuable of all enjoyments,—the pleasure to be derived from the charms of nature,—the great majority of the inhabitants of Dublin have as yet but very imperfectly learned to appreciate the treasures of this kind which they possess, and nothing can be more certain than that they do not enjoy them as they should. They pour forth in thousands to indulge in the unhealthy excitement of the bustle and dust of Kingstown, and other suburban outlets which resemble it; but this is a mere fashion, habit; call it what you will, it is not the sober and quiet enjoyment of Nature. The more solitary and sublime scenery of Howth has hitherto been deserted, or known only to the musing spirit, which, wearied of the turmoil and noise of the busy haunts of commerce and other ordinary and professional avocations, seeks the calm and soothing tranquillity of more retired spots, where, in the contemplation of the works of Nature, it can recover health and spirits for renewed exertion.

Strange as it may seem, this high and noble appreciation of the purest sources of enjoyment seems usually strongest in the sated child of the world, who, having tried all the pleasures it offers, finding them ineffectual and unsatisfactory, turns at last, with true wisdom, to the only sources of real happiness in healthful and exhi-

larating exercise amid natural scenery. If proof of this be necessary,—though in truth it is not,—we would conclude with the testimony of one of the noblest but most erring spirits of the age, who has left us the fruit of his experience in the following beautiful lines :—

“ To sit on rocks,—to muse o’er flood and fell,—  
To slowly trace the forest’s shady scene,  
Where things that own not man’s dominion dwell,  
And mortal foot hath ne’er or rarely been:  
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,  
With the wild flock that never needs a fold ;  
Alone o’er steeps and foaming falls to lean ;  
This is not solitude : ’Tis but to hold  
Converse with Nature’s charms, and view her stores unroll’d.

“ But, midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,  
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,  
And roam along, the world’s tired denizen,  
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless ;  
Minions of splendour, shrinking from distress !  
None who with kindred consciousness endued,  
If we were not, would seem to smile the less,  
Of all that flattered, followed, sought, and sued ;  
This is to be alone ; this, this is Solitude !”

The design of our little book is, however, rather to exhibit Howth in a livelier point of view, as a place for the enjoyment of exhilarating recreation to be derived from exercise amid the most picturesque marine and mountain scenery, easily accessible, and productive of the truest and most healthful pleasure that can be conceived.

THE END.

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